

EXHIBIT NO. JTX-030 evid.
CAUSE NO. 3:22-cv-00734-DPJ-HSO-LHS
WITNESS _____
CLERK: SHONE POWELL

FEB 26 2024

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI
Cordice Crane, REPORTER

STANDING JOINT CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
Public Hearing on 08/23/2021

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TRANSCRIPT OF AUDIO-RECORDED

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PUBLIC HEARING OF THE

10 **STANDING JOINT CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE**

11

AUGUST 23, 2021

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JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

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1 MR. BECKETT: Uh, we're getting -- uh, we're just
2 getting started, six -- 6:00 o'clock. And, uh, we have
3 others that are -- that are watching online. So we're
4 going -- we're going to go ahead and -- and get
5 started on the [inaudible] here tonight is, uh, just,
6 uh, this is the last of -- of this series of meetings.

7 Uh, this joint committee holds these public
8 hearings to -- to receive suggestions and
9 recommendations on how the Mississippi Legislature
10 should redistrict itself and its four congressional
11 districts.

12 Uh, during the course of the hearing, uh, we'll --
13 -- we'll allow, uh, members of the public in our
14 community to, uh, give me, uh, a recommendation or
15 statements. Uh, and, uh, you're not -- you're limited
16 to make it about how our county redistricting happens.

17 Um, you know, this is not -- not time that we'll
18 be asking questions or presenting plans, or anything
19 like this. This is the time when we'll be hearing from
20 the public about -- about your comments of uh -- uh,
21 recommendations that you have.

22 Uh, by custom we try to give, uh, members of the
23 public, uh, a free opportunity to say what they wish.
24 In cases where it appears that, um, there are going to
25 be many persons who want to speak, um, and we have

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1 several who'd like to speak tonight, um, we -- we
2 reserve the right to limit your time.

3 Uh, as to, uh, what limits we impose, will be up
4 to this chair and depending on how many persons want
5 to speak. Because we want to give everybody an
6 opportunity, we'll just ask that you be respectful of
7 that.

8 Uh, one thing I do want to point, get to the
9 questions, we're going -- this committee will be
10 redistricting the Senate and -- this is the Senate and
11 the House, congressional districts. We will not be
12 responsible for things that the county supervisor will
13 do, or city hall will do. We have asked and received a
14 lot of questions about that.

15 But we'll -- we'll make that, uh, clear. So at
16 this time, um, chair, I'd like to call the public
17 hearing of the joint reapportionment committee, uh,
18 joint congressional redistricting committee to order.
19 And I ask, uh, our council to call the role of members
20 present.

21 MALE 1: Mr. Beckett.

22 MR. BECKETT: Here.

23 MALE 1: Mr. Black.

24 MR. BLACK: Here.

25 MALE 1: Mr. Brown.

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1 MR. BROWN: Here.
2 MALE 1: Mr. Eubanks. Mr. Ford.
3 MR. FORD: Here.
4 MALE 1: Mr. Mango.
5 MR. MANGO: Here.
6 MALE 1: Mr. Reed.
7 MR. REED: Here.
8 MALE 1: Mr. Shanks.
9 MR. SHANKS: Here.
10 MALE 1: Mr. Taylor.
11 MR. TAYLOR: Here.
12 MALE 1: Mr. White. Mr. Kirby.
13 MR. KIRBY: Here.
14 MALE 1: Mr. Brian.
15 MR. BRIAN: Here.
16 MALE 1: Mr. Duvall.
17 MR. DUVAL: Here.
18 MALE 1: Mr. Harkins.
19 MR. HARKINS: Here.
20 MALE 1: Mr. Hops.
21 MR. HOPS: Here.
22 MALE 1: Mr. Parker. Mr. Simmons.
23 MR. SIMMONS: Here.
24 MALE 1: Mr. Tate.
25 MR. TATE: Here.

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1 MALE 1: Mr. Pool.

2 MR. POOL: Here.

3 MALE 1: Mr. Williams.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Here.

5 MR. BECKETT: Thank you for that. Uh, I just want
6 to remind you that, uh, we have -- we don't have to
7 count the quorum. And that we're -- the [inaudible]
8 roll call simply for the purposes of documenting who
9 is present.

10 Um, the, uh -- and I don't think there's anyone
11 coming in while roll was being called. But, um, I know
12 we have several of the members of the House and the
13 Senate that are present today and I want to give them
14 an opportunity to introduce themselves. Um, Mark [ph]
15 let's start with you if you want.

16 MR. NORWOOD: I'm Senator Sollie Norwood,
17 representing District 28 here in Hinds County.

18 MR. BUTLER: I'm Senator Albert Butler. Senator
19 of 36th District, Claiborne, Jefferson, Copiah.

20 MR. HINES: John Hines, state representative,
21 District 50. Washington, Bolivar, Issaquena County.

22 MALE 2: Representative [inaudible] District 16,
23 D, Monroe County.

24 MS. JACKSON-MCCRAY: Representative Hester
25 Jackson-McCray, District 40, DeSoto County.

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1 MS. FOSTER: Representative Stephanie Foster,
2 representing, um, District 63. Hinds, Warren, Yazoo.

3 MS. LEWIS-GIBBS: Representative Debra Lewis-
4 Gibbs House District 72. Hinds and Yazoo Counties.

5 MR. STAMPS: Representative De'Keither Stamps,
6 House District 66. Hinds County.

7 MS. SUMMERS: Representative Zakiya Summers,
8 District 68. Hinds and Rankin.

9 MR. BELL: Chris Bell, House District 65. Hinds
10 County.

11 MR. HARNESS: Jeffery Harness, representative of
12 House District 85. Jefferson, Claiborne, Franklin, and
13 Warren Counties.

14 MALE 3: [inaudible] District 10.

15 MALE 4: [inaudible] District [inaudible]

16 MR. NEWMAN: Gene Newman, representative 61.
17 Rankin County.

18 MR. MICHEL: Walter Michel, District 25. Madison
19 and Hinds Counties.

20 MR. BECKETT: [inaudible] doing this. Uh, thank
21 you all for -- for being with us tonight. Um, the, uh
22 -- also, in addition -- in addition to that, uh, we're
23 just -- we're going to thank our -- our staff
24 [inaudible] just for all their hard work in getting
25 this -- this meeting ready.

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1 But also, this is a series of meetings. We're
2 going to hear a lot of orders that they're -- they're
3 going to have to do in -- in the future. And so,
4 relevant of that and -- and out of this, before --
5 before we actually start, if there is any members of
6 the committee that have anything they would like to
7 say, uh, I want to open up to that.

8 Okay. Well, um, appreciate that. And we'll find
9 another opportunity if -- if they think of something
10 else and -- and they want to come up. Come [inaudible]
11 and say.

12 Uh, as we -- as we start, you know, I -- I just -
13 - I want to once again just thank the staff for all
14 their work. One thing they've done is they've gone
15 through all the transcripts from the 2010 meetings,
16 and [inaudible] certain, uh, facts and circumstances
17 that -- that people keep bringing up, that, uh,
18 someone today might not ask.

19 And I just want to go over that. And I know this
20 -- I know this is redundant for -- for some of you.
21 But, uh, you know we're -- we're -- we're informed to
22 conduct this like it's the only period you might've
23 been you. Or they're [inaudible] everybody watching.
24 So if you hear something you've heard before, I
25 apologize for that.

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1 But, uh -- but they did go through my few
2 suggestions [inaudible] that I should just talk about
3 and inform you that -- that might give a little
4 information to the public that they can talk about or
5 -- or -- or have -- I've ordered about. Uh -- uh,
6 couple of things if -- we'll [inaudible] redistrict.

7 And, uh, you need to -- you need to know that,
8 uh, both the federal constitution requirements of one
9 person, one vote requires [inaudible] both the
10 congressional districts and the legislative districts.
11 That means you're following the Census.

12 And additionally, section 254 of our constitution
13 of [inaudible] united required that we redistrict the
14 legislature. So it's not an optional thing. It's not -
15 - not a [inaudible] we shall -- we shall do it.

16 So, uh, we're at our Census now, and so we are
17 going to redistrict in the process. You know, going
18 back, you know, when -- when does redistricting start?
19 Technically, I guess it started with gaining that
20 Census.

21 Because -- because the county of our population
22 naturally determined, uh, how many people we had, how
23 many people we're going to be in each district, and
24 what -- what [inaudible]

25 This meeting was -- was organized 1st of July,

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1 and then about the first week of August we started
2 having, uh, these public hearings across the state.
3 We've had -- we've had nine -- this is the ninth of
4 those public hearings.

5 And so, uh, the process I guess began in earnest
6 as far as taking information at -- at the beginning of
7 those hearings. We have not drawn any plan, we have
8 not -- we're just in the information gathering stage
9 right now. And with cause to formatting deadlines,
10 next year for our, uh, congressional [inaudible]

11 You know, and I am presenting congressional
12 redistricting will come first. And will, um -- and
13 will occur again in the fall of this year. Uh, we'll -
14 -- we'll be working on it, on the legislative
15 [inaudible] year the months of 2022 legislative
16 session. Um, and we don't -- we don't run next year
17 legislatively.

18 So we have more time to do the legislative
19 district, we have the requirements that's when they
20 need to be done. So we're -- we're going to do them
21 and your decision next year. But we're going to
22 attempt to do congressional redistricting first.
23 Because that -- that qualified more here.

24 Um, you know, and -- you know, [inaudible] uh,
25 just honestly, we're going to first child [ph] on

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1 this. We've done these, um, huge around the state and
2 other places. Like, our first one was in Meridian and
3 the entire year it had a lot of population. All right.
4 We've done places like Tate County or Clarke County,
5 any population [inaudible] so between those -- those
6 counties.

7 Um, we don't do the coast, or every county and
8 population. And -- and here -- in -- in this area,
9 you're going to have some with a gained population,
10 some that are lost. And that -- that's typical of most
11 -- most areas.

12 Although, I think we all know that, um, our --
13 our state -- the population gain has been limited --
14 limited to a few number counties. And the -- and the
15 losses have been fairly widespread. Although there
16 wasn't a lot of change in our population, it was
17 regular movement around -- around the state.

18 Um, but whether we've gained or lost population
19 creates, um, you know, it's own unique set of
20 problems. Like, I just -- take me for instance. I'm in
21 a very rural area already and have lost population.

22 So my district may be huge and getting larger.
23 Senator Kirby's district is not very large because he
24 lives in a lot more populated area. So I mean -- so if
25 you look at a map, you're going to see all sizes.

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1 You're going -- you're going to see very small
2 districts, you're going to see very large districts.
3 And -- and unfortunately, uh, our large districts may
4 get larger. And some of our small districts may get
5 smaller.

6 But that's -- that's just fact. There will be --
7 there will be challenges. We've had a -- a regular
8 amendment in our congressional districts. Uh, we've
9 had -- we've -- it's just -- it's just a fact that
10 people are moving around in -- in the state.

11 You know -- you know, come to pass, we'd like to
12 start presenting this -- this Census using estimates.
13 And, uh, our first four or five, uh, periods we've had
14 -- we had access, very little changes in the numbers,
15 but -- but there -- they were estimates.

16 Um, and then about the 12th or 13th of -- of
17 August we received another set of numbers which were
18 basically going to be the final numbers. Although
19 they're not the ones that -- when you use to draw
20 maps.

21 They still could change up until September 30th.
22 Uh, that's when we're -- that's when we're to receive
23 the final number changing for actual numbers that will
24 be used to draw conditions.

25 But the -- the estimates and the numbers we have

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1 now are useful in the fact that if you refer to the
2 maps that are outside, they show you what parts of the
3 state have gained population, what parts of the state
4 have lost population. Show you which districts have
5 gained population, and which ones have lost
6 population.

7 And, you know, you -- you can just count -- count
8 [inaudible] where -- what -- what that's going to do
9 to representation. Because of one man one vote,
10 representation is going to follow people. So you can -
11 - you can kind of know -- know what's happening there.

12 Um, you know, how many members of the public
13 participate in the process, and, uh, we're going to
14 [inaudible] everyone. If by [inaudible] is facing the
15 concerns of this meeting, uh -- uh, we're -- we're
16 here to hear any concerns and see that we will listen
17 to any matter that truly is brought to our attention
18 about how and where we will draw congressional or
19 legislative lines.

20 Um, you know, and we've asked members to sign a
21 card. And the sole purpose of -- of doing that is just
22 so I have your name. And I'm going to call in the
23 order that the cards -- people signed the cards.

24 And so that's -- that was -- that's the purpose
25 of -- of doing that. Is -- is to help me to kind of

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1 keep some kind of order of what we're doing this --
2 how we're doing this. Um, you can submit a suggestion
3 to the committee in writing on e-mail whether --
4 whether you speak tonight or not.

5 Um, if you don't say anything, you still can
6 submit in -- in your comments in writing. But if -- if
7 you do submit your comment in writing, you get, uh, a
8 recommended and read [inaudible] you use the
9 committee's public access computer towers. Uh, so
10 there are multiple ways to come up and participate.

11 You know, at this hearing you all are going to
12 have concerns that we kind of expect to hear. We're
13 going to hear -- expect for you to have all kinds of
14 concerns. But, uh, just a few things.

15 We've -- we've heard voting rights as a concern,
16 uh, a concern [inaudible] precincts. Uh, splitting
17 just powers [ph] of districts that are odd-shaped. Uh,
18 just if -- if it's something that concerns someone,
19 um, then pretty much it concerns someone else, and
20 another part of the state and it's been -- it's been
21 brought to our attention. But don't let that stop you.
22 If you have something that you want to talk about, the
23 -- this is your opportunity to do that.

24 And, you know, I [inaudible] public comment made
25 to provide information about, uh, our -- provide

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1 information on board time for the [inaudible] and
2 members of the public should be advised to send mail
3 to.

4 And I know that this information is -- is
5 outside. But those watching, may not have it -- don't
6 -- may not have access to the information. So I want
7 to be sure and -- and state that again. You can send -
8 - you can send it by mail to Ted Booth, Staff Council
9 Joint Reapportionment Committee PO Box 1204, Jackson,
10 Mississippi 39215-1204. Or you can send and e-mail to
11 ted.booth@peer and that's p-e-e-r, uh, .ms.gov.

12 And, uh, please provide, uh, information so a
13 staff can follow up. Send your e-mail address or
14 telephone number. Don't -- don't just send us a
15 question and not provide some way for us to get back
16 to you.

17 Uh, so, um, we [inaudible] proper to that forum.
18 And the public access for congressional redistricting
19 will commence following the delivery of our, uh, final
20 data. That's the PL-94-171 data which -- which should
21 arrive at the close of September. The public access
22 time for [inaudible] will -- will last three weeks
23 after -- after a decision at that.

24 So mostly from the first of October you'll have
25 three weeks, uh, for legislative -- legislative

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1 districts to occur. Legislative data districts will
2 occur after July 1, 2022, and will last three weeks.
3 But we're not going to be, um -- they won't be too
4 late because we won't be doing those districts before
5 then. We won't be doing the congressional portion.

6 Uh, and be -- before we open this up has any
7 member of the committee that needs to [inaudible] add
8 something before we start hearing from the public
9 [ph].

10 All right. Well, at this time, then we'll just --
11 uh, we're going to have a public forum. Um [inaudible]
12 would -- I think you wanted to -- to hear. Did you
13 have something?

14 MS. JACKSON: Yes.

15 MR. BECKETT: All right. Now if you would come to
16 the microphone. I think, uh, we can probably all hear,
17 uh, we're doing that for our broadcast.

18 MS. JACKSON: To the Standing Joint Committee on
19 Reapportionment of the districts. Chairman Charles Jim
20 Beckett. Good evening members of the redistricting
21 committee and the ladies and gentlemen in the
22 audience, and everyone who's watching on YouTube.

23 I am Representative Hester Jackson Mc-Cray, the
24 first African American who has ever been elected to
25 represent DeSoto County House District 40 in

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1 Mississippi [inaudible]

2 DeSoto County has the third largest minority
3 population in our state. But I feel that our minority
4 population community has been successfully falling
5 apart and gerrymandered so that our votes have been
6 diluted.

7 And it has been impossible for a person of color
8 to win a seat at the legislative table where decisions
9 are made, until my House 40 victory in 2019.

10 I am also proud -- I am also the proud sponsor of
11 the Mississippi Early Voting Initiative number 78 that
12 was just approved on August 2nd for signature
13 collections by secretary of state. And walked through
14 all of the signing, so that we all can enjoy the
15 convenience of no fewer than 10 day early voting for
16 every election.

17 Tonight I have raised suggestions for the
18 redistricting Mississippi House, Senate, judicial
19 circuit, chancery, and congressional district based
20 upon the recent release of Census data so that
21 boundaries are drawn fairly to reflect the broad
22 minority population in Mississippi. So that we all --
23 so that we all have fair representation in our
24 Mississippi business meetings, where important
25 decisions about our futures are made.

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1 Some of these suggestions are very area specific,
2 complex, and comprehensive. And since I do not want to
3 bore the TV listeners, or provide helpful information
4 to this committee, I will only mention a few of them.
5 And then provide this committee with all of the -- all
6 of these suggestions in writing after I finish
7 speaking.

8 The biggest proposed change that I am handing to
9 you tonight in this paperwork, which is complicated
10 and involved, moving precincts is to create a second
11 minority majority congressional district. That is the
12 largest revisionary recommendation that I am providing
13 to you tonight.

14 And copies of this redistricting proposal are
15 being sent to the vote section of the justice
16 department. Beginning with my home county of DeSoto,
17 here are some recommendations for redistricting
18 legislative districts.

19 DeSoto county would have about 11 legislative
20 seats, presently there are only one minority district,
21 mine. And yet, according to the new Census data, 42
22 percent of DeSoto County population is a minority.
23 This is way out of proportion.

24 A proposed solution is when you redistrict, there
25 should be three minority house districts, which

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1 includes House 40. And a new minority Senate district
2 which should be Senate District 2. All of these new
3 boundaries should all be contained inside DeSoto
4 County.

5 Another example of these redistricting
6 suggestions, basically one. New Census information in
7 Harrison and Jackson County which will have 21
8 legislative seats, presently only two are occupied by
9 minority.

10 Yet, minority now makes up 39 percent of their
11 population. There is little to no equity in these
12 districts. This -- this can be corrected when you
13 redistrict. A solution would be if two minority
14 majority house seats, and one of the Senate seats are
15 gone in Jackson County.

16 Three minority majority house seats, and one new
17 Senate seat should be drawn in Harrison County. That
18 would -- that would be a fair redistricting solution.
19 There are 70 percent packed Senate and House district
20 seat. When you redraw Mississippi legislative
21 districts, would you please unpack them?

22 We estimate that unpacking the district will
23 create seven additional minority house districts, and
24 four minority Senate districts. These three Senate
25 districts should be drawn to reflect the -- the

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1 constituents as a new minority Senate district.

2 Again, I will begin with my home county of
3 DeSoto. Where we have a possible new minority majority
4 Senate district, too, in Horn Lake and part of
5 Southhaven. I know this is kind of -- of a repeat, but
6 I am from DeSoto County.

7 Senator -- Senate District 8 should be all in
8 Chickasaw, supervisors 4 and 5 in Lee County,
9 supervisory 4 in Calhoun County, and supervisory 4 in
10 Monroe County. And Senate District 2 should be all of
11 Marshall County, and part of Panola and Tate County.

12 In conclusion, I am asking this committee to draw
13 the new districts so they are compact, and very
14 contiguous and represent entire neighborhoods. Please
15 do not break up communities of interest.

16 When you draw the specific new district border,
17 please avoid racial gerrymandering, and do not dilute
18 minority voting strength. Please comply with the
19 section two and five of the Voting Rights Act and the
20 14th and 15th amendment of the Constitution.

21 Please do not draw districts that are oddly
22 shaped, or break up precincts down the center of the
23 street which causes confusion among voters. Districts
24 and boundaries should run along major landmarks, like
25 rivers and roads, so they are easy for all of our

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1 Mississippi candidates to convey to their voters.

2 Once your new redistricting maps are drawn,
3 please share your work. Give all of our Mississippi
4 communities time to review your proposal before they
5 are given final approval. Please [inaudible] of the
6 period so that you can have the most community
7 involvement in favor before voting to finalize our new
8 Mississippi boundaries.

9 How you make decisions today will set the tone in
10 the future for the Mississippi minority population
11 become the majority population. Please be fair. Thank
12 you, and have a good evening.

13 MR. BECKETT: If you have written material,
14 please present it to our -- our moving staff. All
15 right. Ms. Welchlin. Ms. Sandra Welchlin.

16 MS. WELCHLIN: Good evening. I'm Cassandra
17 Welchlin, the executive director of the Mississippi
18 Black Women's Roundtable. And co-founder of the
19 Mississippi Women's Economic Security Initiative.

20 Women make up 50 -- over 50 percent of
21 Mississippi's population. But yet, we are ranked
22 number 49 for the amount of women serving in
23 Mississippi's legislature. If I'm correct, and you all
24 can tell me if I'm wrong, but we have about 27 women,
25 10 on the Senate and 17 in the House.

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1 Why does that occur? Mississippi women are
2 economic drivers for their families and the broader
3 Mississippi economy. And yet, Mississippi laws, public
4 policies, workplace, and school place barriers in the
5 way that women -- that prohibit women and girls from
6 [inaudible]

7 As a result, Mississippi has the highest poverty
8 rate in the country for women. Overall, 20 percent
9 compared to 12 percent nationally. For black women who
10 live at the intersections of race and gender bias, the
11 poverty rate in Mississippi is three times the rate
12 for white women.

13 And Mississippi families headed by single mothers
14 face the worst poverty rates in the state, and one of
15 the highest poverty rates in the country. So these
16 barriers are not only holding back our families, but
17 it's also holding back businesses and the entire state
18 economy. But it doesn't have to be that way.

19 For example, if Mississippi is to receive equal
20 pay for equal work, we can put \$4.15 billion back into
21 the state's economy. Mississippi women make up half
22 the workforce in this state, but yet we're two thirds
23 of the minimum wage earners making \$7.25. Black women
24 are the largest group of working women in low wage
25 jobs in the state of Mississippi.

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1 Number two, as I said women are being
2 shortchanged by the wage gap. Black women make 56
3 cents on the dollar, white women make 75 cents on the
4 dollar in the state of Mississippi.

5 Number three, women, especially black women, are
6 being held back in the workplace by workplace
7 harassment.

8 And number four, women are struggling to access
9 affordable childcare and affordable healthcare. What
10 does that have to do with this process? It's called
11 connecting the dots.

12 We understand that the kitchen table also
13 reflects the policy table that all of you all
14 represent. And we believe that maps need to be drawn
15 so that women have fair equitable representation in
16 the state at this table, and also at our kitchen
17 tables.

18 So it's important that you have maps that are
19 drawn that are equitable and that are fair for the
20 women in the state of Mississippi. Thank you.

21 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. Um, Ms. Sharon Ford
22 [ph]. [inaudible]

23 MS. FORD: [inaudible]

24 MR. BECKETT: [inaudible]

25 MS. FORD: Good evening. My name is Sharon, and I

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1 only have one question. Um, Mississippi has been
2 identified as a power state.

3 I understand that maps will be drawn by a single
4 party controlled with appeals from the joint state
5 committee action. Residents are still in the hands of
6 a single party election redistricting.

7 In the hopes of transparency, and fair mapping,
8 beginning at the state's yellow [inaudible] section
9 five of the Voting Rights Act, more actions are being
10 taken to ensure that the districting lines are not
11 drawn and pre-determined parts in the un-
12 representatory objectives in driving the outcome.
13 Thank you.

14 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. Uh, Carol Mann.

15 MS. MANN: Thank you. My name is Carol Mann, I'm
16 from District 1, Madison County. I'm here to talk
17 about this -- the District 1 precinct changes on the
18 ballot [inaudible] in the 2020 election.

19 The Madison County Court reviewed thousands of
20 voters on the [inaudible] elect home section which had
21 a capability of holding over 20 homes -- homeowners
22 and thousands of marketplaces to the market
23 departments, but only had three of the homeowners, and
24 24 parking places.

25 There's no formal record of this. The [inaudible]

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1 makers were not aware of this change, the supervisors
2 do not know -- aware of this change, nor was the
3 secretary of state. With my home, Madison County
4 District 19, the precinct might be revised to its
5 former boundaries so that thousands of voters will not
6 have to wait for hours to exercise their right to
7 vote. Thank you very much.

8 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. Um, Ms. Lynn Evans [ph].

9 MS. EVANS: Good evening. My name is Lynn Evans,
10 and I'm from Jackson. I've prepared for this forum
11 some statement to be heard or listened to. So as a
12 Mississippian to have redrawn our [inaudible] line.

13 I appreciate that the committee might be
14 considering the recent public hearings or at least
15 some avenue for public feedback before the redrawn
16 civic maps are voted on in a legislative session. That
17 would make a big difference to all the communities of
18 interest who are following this process.

19 Looking at the latest estimates of shifts in
20 population around the state, we see that eight
21 counties of Mississippi -- out of the counties of
22 Mississippi, six counties pierce in the southern
23 [inaudible] the maps [inaudible] lose by about 10
24 percent or more.

25 The cities of Oxford, D'Iberville, and Pearl all

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1 had 50 percent or more increase. Hinds County lost a
2 little over 2,000 people but we are still the largest
3 county at 227 plus people.

4 Almost all the growth in DeSoto County as have --
5 already been mentioned, about 20,000 people, but it's
6 in the Black population, almost double there in
7 Madison County, about 7,000 people was white. That's
8 in -- that's as true around the country, the greatest
9 population of whites in Mississippi is mainly in rural
10 areas.

11 Ten counties grew by about 2 percent, 8 percent.
12 Jackson, Forrest grew [inaudible] Stone, Oktibbeha,
13 Hancock, Pontotoc, and Newton all [inaudible] due to
14 lost population and gained so little that it's
15 basically a wash.

16 I know that's not going to make your job easier.
17 But the Census numbers show that 70 Mississippi
18 counties do not have enough people to comprise a
19 Senate seat's constituency. And 43 counties do not
20 have enough people to meet the 24,000 thresh --
21 threshold for a House seat.

22 So you will be provided with counties to make new
23 districts, but that still, they need to represent to
24 represent communities of interest including white
25 communities to make sure these communities have an

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1 opportunity to elect someone to best represent them.

2 And I also note that DeSoto, Lee, Forrest
3 [inaudible] Pike, and Walthall Counties saw
4 substantial increases in their Black population.

5 The current estimates show that from 2010 to '20
6 -- I'm sorry. 2010, 2019 became nearly 20,000 Black
7 persons, about 16,000 plus Hispanic persons, and about
8 4,000 are through Asian residents. Because I live in
9 Hinds County, I am interested in seeing at least 4 of
10 the 16 senators elected, who actually live in Hinds
11 County.

12 Because I live in Jackson, because it is
13 Mississippi's half of the city, I would like to see at
14 least two or three state senators who actually live in
15 Jackson representing Jackson. As well as my
16 [inaudible] husband who lived in Jackson City.

17 The city of Jackson needs more influential
18 legislatures [inaudible] in our city's best interest.
19 It's not clear to me at all from the [inaudible]
20 businesses and get what the professionals who move
21 Mississippi, we will continue to regret our path in
22 the city.

23 And I also ask that universities not be split in
24 redone -- drawn districts. We want to be able to vote
25 as that is part of what we invest -- what we invested

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1 in our state. And the [inaudible] vote, that doesn't
2 matter.

3 The latest Census numbers also showed that about
4 38 percent of Mississippi residents are Black, but
5 only about 31 percent of Mississippi legislatures are
6 Black. 51 percent of Mississippians are women, but
7 only 16 percent of the state legislatures are women.

8 We can do better than that. I also ask that
9 staffing, and packing, and your neighboring vote
10 [inaudible] make safe assurance for any party
11 included. A classic, safe district has a tendency to
12 elect more extreme fringe party members, who can
13 [inaudible] and not embarrass the state, and not serve
14 the best interest of all Mississippians.

15 Finally, I'd like to mention some of the issues
16 that Mississippians support but the state legislature
17 has not really addressed. Better school funding, and
18 teacher salaries, make pay expansion, an expansion of
19 voting early, especially with this -- this pandemic.

20 Closing the wage gap for Mississippi women, and
21 [inaudible] and probably more children for [inaudible]
22 following grade care and childcare values.

23 I realize [inaudible] redistricting will not
24 necessarily result in [inaudible] addresses these
25 issues, but it sure would be a start. Again, I thank

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1 you for holding this forum to continue for us to be
2 accountable and to best serve the people of
3 Mississippi. Thanks.

4 MR. BECKETT: Thank you.

5 MALE 5: Mr. Chairman.

6 MR. BECKETT: Yes?

7 MALE 5: Is it possible to bring up the comments
8 from the [inaudible] and make it available to the
9 committee? Is it possible to have the comments today
10 made by the public available to the committee?

11 MR. BECKETT: Yes. It will be [inaudible]
12 notarized.

13 MALE 5: Thank you.

14 MALE 6: All right. Hello, everyone. Thank you
15 for this opportunity. And, uh, assuming you have read
16 the formal [inaudible] I'm going to [try not to be ?]
17 long. But, uh, I want to say this.

18 You know, generally when the section is solely
19 based on race, it's always been a hot topic in
20 Mississippi. And I did -- certainly houses are
21 something that we have talked about.

22 The federal [inaudible] guide evolved years ago,
23 when we -- Mississippi was making its decisions
24 regarding politics and allowing you to build the
25 districts in the process.

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1 As I remember [inaudible] said in the stage
2 [inaudible] but as soon as the federal [inaudible]
3 were drew, it was going to happen.

4 And Jim Crow came, the birth of the Klan came,
5 there were obvious efforts to make sure that Black
6 people didn't have a voice in the state of
7 Mississippi. I've done a little bit of research, not a
8 lot, like I bet you some of these people have.

9 And I learned that it feels that obviously those
10 communities where there are a large portion of Black
11 people, you know, they pick and feel them out, spread
12 them around so they can't get developed a place of
13 strength.

14 And it took a while to know that. And also when
15 I'm looking at -- at Alabama where they're doing this,
16 uh, really it's the same thing that happened in
17 Alabama, and there's other states as well.

18 You know, over in Alabama, you've got seven --
19 you have seven representatives and only one is Black,
20 even though [inaudible] make up about 26 percent of
21 the Black population over there.

22 Because the lines are drawn so that you give
23 these people this one little spot over here and the
24 rest of the community. Kind of similar to what happens
25 over here when you study the, uh, congressional

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1 district.

2 So out of the state, a Senate district is divided
3 up so that even though they have a large portion of
4 Black people there, take a few of them out and put
5 them over here, and a few of them out and put them
6 over there. So they don't get the opportunity to
7 really participate in the process.

8 Another thing that brings up is that when you do
9 that then, those white representatives in those other
10 areas don't really have a relationship with their
11 Black constituents. They really don't.

12 And even if they do have a strong relationship
13 with them, they don't need them to exercise their
14 power. They can go ahead and -- and make -- make
15 [inaudible] people understand that things need to be
16 decided that are beneficial to everybody.

17 That's one of the reasons why we got this
18 division right now, where they refuse [inaudible] you
19 know, uh, people who don't have childcare can still,
20 you know, go. But then when you do, they have poor
21 people not important.

22 Because the poor people are not represented. That
23 is -- that is taxation without representation. And I
24 fought as you all around the state [inaudible] some of
25 you saw me, I was there. And most of the places

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1 wouldn't listen. And most of the people ask you to be
2 fair. Be fair.

3 I say, look, you know, they're not going to be
4 fair. So I'm saying do the right thing. Don't -- don't
5 just be fair, do the right thing. We know what's going
6 on, you know what's going on. You just had to draw --
7 lines been drawn deliberately, not by accident, to
8 minimize the [inaudible] of Black folk.

9 There's no way there are -- I think about 40 to
10 45 percent of this population is Black, and have no
11 representation or powers in the state than they do.
12 And sometimes, I [inaudible] we have some Black people
13 that aren't addicted to city hall. What do we say to
14 them?

15 You just [inaudible] though there's another
16 reason why I think you ought to do that. All right? A
17 lot of the decisions we make in this state regarding
18 federal money, you know, affects the lifestyle of the
19 people that are in the state. But most of that federal
20 money, you know, that usually comes to help get people
21 up off the poverty, uh, line, or the poverty
22 [inaudible] gap.

23 And as long as lines are being drawn like they
24 were being drawn, there's nobody that's going to make
25 any decision that's going to, uh, take that money and

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1 bring it to help there, the citizens of Mississippi.

2 It's just not going to happen unless that money
3 is coming to be given to you. There's a [inaudible] of
4 people for no reason at all, that was intending to be
5 coming here to [inaudible] from poverty. That's the
6 only reason why they're willing to accept the federal
7 money.

8 But that's another thing about that. I also
9 studied, you know, the -- what the state's doing on
10 not doing. Because we also got 2 percent of the Black
11 vote. But for the first four or five years of this
12 decade, you won by 20,000 votes. On the '17 and '18,
13 you're losing about 8 -- 8,000 to 12,000 people. But
14 you also have 8,000 people [inaudible]

15 And some people say that because of the way we
16 are on tech reform or tech innocence, and also the
17 decrease in people that study the [inaudible] was the
18 [inaudible] of their health care. Now, a lot of people
19 in the state, they leave.

20 And one of the reasons when it comes to
21 Mississippi, that we have such high regulations on
22 people that have a licenses in other states and want
23 to come over here and work, they've got to go take
24 another test, and pass that test, get a job, or do
25 something. You know, that -- because they have said

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1 that, too, where they said, now we're going to release
2 [inaudible] uh, five [inaudible] this and that, for
3 2005.

4 You know, we don't transfer that like other
5 states are doing. Now even though Alabama, Louisiana,
6 and Texas, some of those states, are implementing some
7 of the same practices as [inaudible] the population's
8 growing.

9 They're not experiencing the same thing we are.
10 Because people are going there, because they can go
11 over there and get good jobs. They've already gone to
12 school, they got their license, and whatever, and they
13 get good jobs.

14 It seems we have an attitude that's maintaining
15 the status quo. It's been working for us so long,
16 we've always had this power, except when the feds came
17 in and [inaudible] keep it [inaudible] you know, but
18 that's no reason for them to [inaudible] people in the
19 2nd District.

20 And it's not equal like that, uh, in the other
21 districts around the state. Except the fact that you
22 [inaudible] for the gain goes on [inaudible] that's
23 all we got [inaudible] because you're not going to get
24 it.

25 That's just not right. So I'm not saying be fair.

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1 Do the right thing. Now, we know -- I know the action
2 of the federal government [inaudible] on lies because
3 of these kinds of issues. Before the states rights has
4 the power.

5 And we don't want that. I'd rather have the
6 freedom [inaudible] know that there's the people who
7 put [inaudible] over our head, we know things are not
8 going right, and eventually we're going to do the
9 right thing and change some of the laws of
10 Mississippi. I said, yeah, right.

11 If you already [inaudible] then why has it been
12 so true? And so now, if anybody [inaudible] feels
13 [inaudible] tell me anything, trust me, I'll
14 [inaudible] throwing it away. Things are not going to
15 change.

16 Whether Black or not, we got Jackson to change.
17 But then you go to change our [inaudible] was the
18 commission saying [inaudible] before we had, uh, the
19 city council. And then everybody tried to [inaudible]
20 one day Jackson will be a majority Black.

21 And we don't do the right thing now, and we treat
22 the people that are here across the [inaudible] well,
23 they -- they take over, they'll do the same thing.
24 Their aunties, and cousins, and brothers, and sisters.

25 Mississippi is broken. There are people that you

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1 know, kindred, who has [inaudible] with Black
2 Mississippians. That relationship hasn't paid for
3 Black Mississippians. They [inaudible] person is going
4 to participate in what's been the status quo.

5 And that won't do it. Because they go -- they're
6 not going to teach their children that. I remember the
7 day I really began to understand this is going to
8 happen. I was at the Home Depot one day, in Alcorn
9 County to see, you know, white people walking with
10 their Black friends who [inaudible]

11 But I saw a white man walk into Home Depot
12 holding a little mixed boy's hand. I said, man, it's
13 over. It's just a matter of time. So I'm just saying
14 do the right thing. Think, look ahead, look at what's
15 happening.

16 As I just mentioned, man, look at all the Black
17 voters are sick of what's going on. When we had
18 reconstruction, there were no serious problems. Black
19 people didn't act crazy and try to make white people
20 be, you know, disenfranchised.

21 Nothing like that happened. Everybody got along.
22 Bet you [inaudible] I agree [inaudible] but as soon as
23 it was over with, they'll resent you. It still won't
24 [inaudible]

25 Now, that's not going to happen. Not much longer.

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1 I'm going to tell you the truth. I forget I -- I -- I
2 [inaudible] I sometimes so do. I get excited about
3 these kind of things.

4 You know, I [inaudible] some of this situation's
5 personal and have the information about [inaudible]
6 but the money needs to come in here for the Black
7 people who are co-dependent, we won't get none.

8 We really won't get none. They send back federal
9 money, that's come -- they -- they come in and help
10 people that are struggling. And then you go through
11 the steps and they see [inaudible]

12 Just do the right thing. I'm going to [inaudible]
13 any time. I know I get a little bit excited. But we
14 do. I've got children, too. I appreciate you'll do the
15 right thing. Thank you.

16 MR. BECKETT: Uh, Ms. Jennifer Riley-Collins.

17 MS. RILEY-COLLINS: Good evening. I am Jennifer
18 Riley-Collins, and I just want to touch on a couple of
19 points regarding some key, uh, populations.

20 First, um, I want to ask that any proposed lines,
21 uh, be drawn in such a way that they do not dilute,
22 uh, the minority vote, uh, as is required in section
23 2. I want to point out that the state of Mississippi
24 is home to a growing population, a growing community
25 of immigrants.

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1 Foreign-born residents are an important part of
2 our state, they're an important part and contribute to
3 our labor force. They are our neighbors, they are
4 business owners, taxpayers, they are part of
5 Mississippi's diverse and thriving community.

6 They are contributors that benefit us all. I
7 therefore ask that non-citizens who are persons under
8 the United States Constitution and are entitled
9 therefore to protection under same, be given
10 consideration as you redraw these district lines.

11 I also want to speak on behalf of those who can
12 not participate via live stream because they are
13 incarcerated. Prisoners are not usually incarcerated
14 in our state in the same community from which they --
15 out -- out of which they, uh, reside.

16 This residence rule skews the balance of
17 political power by inflating the population counts of
18 communities where prisons are located. By including
19 the non-voting prison populations in these districts
20 during the redistricting process.

21 There is plentifully available data on the
22 Mississippi Department of Correction's website that
23 identifies the communities from which these
24 incarcerated persons come. We're asking that the
25 legislature prevent the residents rule skewing, and

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1 allocate that population appropriately back to the
2 community to which these persons will return. Thank
3 you for your time.

4 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. Uh, Mr. Ray Farmer [ph].
5 Mr. Farmer -- Mr. Farmer?

6 MR. FARMER: Hi. My name is [inaudible] and I
7 began working on the issues of redistricting and
8 reapportionment with Henry Kirtsey [ph] and Frank
9 Parker [ph] over 40 years ago.

10 So I have some concept of what you're going
11 through. I have -- I may at a later date, like, in
12 October when you have your computers available to deal
13 with the reapportionment of the legislative seats, but
14 today I have a specific recommendation concerning the
15 congressional districts based on a community of
16 interest.

17 The -- there has to be a significant change in
18 the 2nd Congressional District, and I will recommend
19 that we add large por -- portions of the city of
20 Jackson, and all of Adams County into the 2nd
21 Congressional District.

22 I am a resident of precinct nine in the Lowndes
23 County area of Jackson, and feel I have less so in
24 common with the remainder of our citizens in Jackson
25 than I do with the people I am living with in the 3rd

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1 Congressional District.

2 And therefore, would very much like to see that
3 precincts like mine be incorporated into the 2nd
4 Congressional District so that all of us Jacksonians
5 will be represented by the same congressman. And thank
6 you very much.

7 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. Um, Bobbie Bingham [ph].

8 MS. BINGHAM-MORROW: Good evening. My name is
9 Bobbie Bingham-Morrow. And I attended the
10 redistricting meeting that was held in Natchez last
11 week. And the legislators said something that really
12 broke my heart. I was so upset about it, I talked
13 about it all the way home. And I was -- I didn't ask a
14 question in the session, why are we doing this?

15 The question that I asked was, once you draw your
16 lines, when do we get to comment and do what we're
17 doing now, make recommendations and suggestions, after
18 you draw your final lines? Because what we're talking
19 about right now are old numbers. We're not using the
20 new numbers, we don't know what you're going to do
21 with the new numbers.

22 So that is the main thing that I want is for you
23 to -- to schedule and distribute -- distribute a
24 schedule after you've drawn your lines so that we can
25 do this thing we're doing then. Why can we not have

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1 comment on the lines that you draw?

2 Why can't we do that? Let's do that, that is not
3 a suggestion. That we have a series of hearings after
4 you have drawn the lines that you're going to draw, so
5 that the public has comment. And hopefully it will
6 matter.

7 My other thing is, will there be a listing of all
8 the suggestions and points for improvement that
9 individuals are providing to you now? Will there be a
10 location that we can access this information? Will the
11 videos be available?

12 Uh, where can we go to look at previous -- those
13 hearings that we were not privy to attend? Where can
14 we go to -- to look at that information? so that is
15 what I would like. Is for you to allow us to have
16 public hearings after you have drawn the lines, and
17 that we have access to the questions that individuals
18 are asking, and what your response to those questions
19 are. Thank you.

20 MR. BECKETT: Thank you. Um, and I call on Ms.
21 [inaudible]

22 MS. ALBRIGHT-HANES: Good evening, Chairman
23 Beckett and members of the committee. I thank you for
24 the opportunity to speak at this very important
25 hearing.

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1 My name is Dashawni Albright-Hanes [ph] and I'm a
2 lifelong resident of Hinds County here in Jackson
3 Mississippi, Congressional District 2, Senate District
4 27 honorable Hillman Frazier, and House District 65,
5 the honorable Chris Bell. I am also first vice
6 president for the Jackson NAACP. I stand before you to
7 speak on the current redistricting process, and how it
8 should be fair and transparent.

9 It is our desire that this committee respect and
10 not discriminate against the already disenfranchised
11 Mississippi communities. Thank you for the series of
12 hearings that you've conducted throughout the state.
13 I've had a chance to attend most of them.

14 And it is our request that today's hearing is not
15 the last. Like Ms. Morrow, we are also, um, requesting
16 additional hearings and community meetings after maps
17 have been developed. Um, so that the community can
18 have a chance to ask questions and provide comments.

19 Our branch works with the state [inaudible]
20 protection program that lodges complaints about voter
21 suppression. Each year, we receive calls from over
22 [inaudible] our phone lines, denied regular ballots
23 because of illegal address verification practices, and
24 these are acts of voter suppression.

25 Many of these calls come from Madison County each

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1 year, where practices such as [inaudible] precincts
2 changes in person location without voter notification,
3 and voter intimidation through law enforcement
4 presence are regular occurrences.

5 In the past, Mississippi has been home to several
6 law suits alleging racial vote [inaudible] just
7 recently in 2018 when three African American voters
8 from Senate District 22 filed a federal lawsuit
9 challenging the district on section 2 of the Voting
10 Rights Act. The district diverted the votes of African
11 Americans and prevented them from electing the
12 candidate of their choice. In 2019, the court
13 concluded District 22 did violate section 2.

14 The legislature then redrew that district. We do
15 not want a repeat of Mississippi unfair act practices.
16 Voting violation impairs the communities that are
17 different to come together and advocate for important
18 issues. Moreover, we know that who is elected in these
19 four lucrative [ph] districts would not be committed
20 to our concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to
21 address this committee.

22 MR. BECKET: Thank you. Um, and that does, uh,
23 conclude the questions that I have up here. Do I have
24 a member of the committee who wants to ask a question
25 for -- ? All right. Well, I just want to take this

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1 time to thank all of you for your attendance.

2 And we thank our staff for [inaudible] job of
3 doing and preparing this -- this series of -- of
4 meetings. And just remind the public that we're just
5 in the very beginning process. Uh, and that, you know,
6 you [inaudible] to make any comments or suggestions of
7 the [inaudible]

8 And once again, I'm going to give you the address
9 by mailing any of that information to. Ted Booth,
10 Staff Council Joint Reapportionment Committee PO Box
11 1204, Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1204. Or you can e-
12 mail that information to ted.booth@peer.ms.gov.

13 And -- and lastly, please -- please provide the
14 staff, um, the address or e-mail information so they
15 can follow up with that.

16 Um, and once -- once again, I want to -- want to
17 thank the committee members for their attendance, and
18 -- and the public. And with that [inaudible]
19 adjourned.

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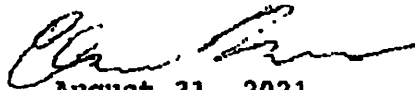
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10 I further declare that I have no interest in the
11 event of the action.

12

13


August 31, 2021

14

Chris Naaden

15

16

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18 (Standing Joint Congressional Redistricting Committee,
19 Jackson, 8-23-21)

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JTX-030-066

From the desk of:

Representative Hester Jackson-McCray
Mississippi House of Representatives
District 40, DeSoto County
901-410-7875 hmcrcay82@gmail.com



To: The Standing Joint Committee on Reapportionment and Redistricting,

Chairman Charles Jim Beckett,

Good evening Members of the Redistricting Committee, and ladies and gentlemen in our audience... and everyone on television.

I am Representative Hester Jackson-McCray, the first African American who has ever been elected to represent DeSoto County's House District 40, in Mississippi's Capitol. DeSoto County has the 3rd largest minority population in our state, but I feel that our minority population communities have been successfully broken apart and gerrymandered so that our vote has been diluted, and it has been impossible for a person of color to win a seat at the legislative table where decisions are made until my House 40 victory in 2019.

I am also the proud sponsor of the Mississippi Early Voting Initiative #78 that was just approved on August the 2nd for signature collection by the Secretary of State, and hope you will all sign it, so that we can all enjoy the convenience of no fewer than 10 days of early voting for every election.

Tonight, I am bringing suggestions for redistricting Mississippi House, Senate, Judicial, Circuit, Chancery and Congressional Districts based upon the recently released census data so that boundaries are drawn fairly to reflect the growing minority population in Mississippi, so that we can ALL have fair representation at our Mississippi business meetings where important decisions about our future are made. Some of these suggestions are very area specific, complex and comprehensive, and since I do not want to bore the tv listeners, but provide helpful information to this committee I will only mention a few of them and then provide this committee with all of these suggestions in writing after I have finished speaking.

The biggest proposed change that I am handing to you tonight in this paperwork, which is complicated and involves moving precincts, is to create a 2nd minority majority Congressional District. That is the largest redistricting recommendation that I am providing to you tonight and copies of this redistricting proposals are being sent to the voting section of the Justice Department.

Beginning with my home county of DeSoto, here are some recommendations for REDISTRICTING LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS. DeSoto County will have around eleven Legislative seats. Presently, there is only one minority district, mine, and yet according to the new census data 42% of the DeSoto County's population is a minority. This is way out of proportion!

A proposed solution is when you redistrict, there should be three minority House districts, which include House 40, and a new minority senate district which should be Senate District 2. All of these new boundaries should all be contained inside DeSoto County.

Another example of these redistricting suggestions based upon new census information are in Harrison and Jackson Counties which will have 21 legislative seats! Presently, only 2 are occupied by minorities, yet minorities now make up 39% of their population. There is little to no equity in these districts. This can be corrected when you redistrict.

A SOLUTION would be if 2 minority/majority House seats and one new Senate seat are drawn in Jackson County.

SDT-SJLCRR-000445

JTX-030-067

Three minority/majority House seats and one new Senate seat should be drawn in Harrison County. That would be a fair redistricting solution.

There are 70% packed Senate and House District seats!! When you redraw Mississippi's legislative districts would you please unpack them? We estimate that UNPACKING DISTRICTS WILL CREATE SEVEN ADDITIONAL MINORITY HOUSE DISTRICTS AND 4 MINORITY SENATE DISTRICTS.

These 3 Senate Districts should be drawn to reflect their constituents as new MINORITY SENATE DISTRICTS. Again, I will begin in my home County of DeSoto where we have a possible new minority majority Senate District 2 in Horn Lake and Part of Southaven, I know this is kind of a repeat, but I am from DeSoto County.

Senate District 8, should be all of Chickasaw, Supervisory 4 and 5 in Lee County, Supervisory 4 in Calhoun County, and Supervisory District 4 in Monroe County.

And ...

Senate District 10, should be all of Marshall County and parts of Panola and Tate Counties.

In conclusion, I am asking this committee to draw the new districts so that they are compact and very contiguous and represent entire neighborhoods. Please do not break up communities of interest. When you draw Mississippi's new district boundaries, please avoid racial gerrymandering and do not dilute minority voting strength.

Please comply with sections 2 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act and the 14th and 15th amendments of the Constitution. Please do not draw districts that are oddly shaped, or break up precincts down the center of streets which causes confusion among voters.

Districts and boundaries should run along major landmarks like rivers and roads, so they are easy for all of our Mississippi candidates to convey to voters.

Once your new redistricting maps are drawn, please share your work!

Give all of our Mississippi communities time to review your proposals before they are given final approval. Please call more public hearings so that you can have the most community involvement and information before voting to finalize our new Mississippi boundaries.

How you make decisions today, will set the tone in the future when Mississippi's minority population becomes the majority population.

Please be Fair.

Thank-you.

end of speech

REDISTRICTING LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS

Harrison and Jackson Counties will have 21 legislative seats! Presently, only 2 are occupied by minorities yet minorities now make up 39% of the population. There is little to no equity in these districts. This must be corrected.

A SOLUTION

Two House seats in Jackson and one Senate seat should be for minorities

Three House seats in Harrison and one Senate seat should be for minorities

Desoto County will have eleven Legislative seats. Presently, there is only one minority district, yet 42% of the population is minority. This is way out of proportion!

SOLUTION

Three House seats and one Senate seat inside Desoto County need to be minority districts

There are 70% packed Senate and House District seats!!

Senate Districts that are packed: 21, 36, 26, 11, 24, 28, 12, and 27.

House Districts that are packed: 110, 49, 119, 57, 9, 68, 47, 69, 72, 36, 50, 29, 30, 41, 42, 26, 33, 32, 80, 51, 27, 31, 103, 71, and 82.

UNPACKING THESE DISTRICTS WILL CREATE SEVEN (7) ADDITIONAL MINORITY HOUSE DISTRICTS AND 4 MINORITY SENATE DISTRICTS.

MINORITY SENATE DISTRICTS that should be drawn to reflect their minority/majority constituents

Senate District 2: Horn Lake and part of Southaven

Senate District 8: All of Chickasaw, Supervisory districts 4 and 5 in Lee County, Supervisory district 4 in Calhoun County, and Supervisory district 4 in Monroe County

Senate District 10: All of Marshall and minority/majority parts of Panola and Tate Counties

Senate District 14: Drop Leflore and Tate Counties, and add all of Holmes County

Senate District 23: Drop Yazoo County and instead add these precincts of Hinds County: Bolton, Edward, and Byram.

Senate District 48: Combine minority/majority precincts in Harrison County

Senate District 51: Combine minority/majority precincts of Moss Point, Pascagoula and Gautier.

Senate District 31: Combine minority/majority precincts of Scott, Leak, and Newton.

CREATE ONE MORE MINORITY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,

SO MISSISSIPPI HAS 2 MINORITY/MAJORITY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS.

Redistricting for a minority/majority CD means moving supervisory districts, precincts and counties:

Move Neshoba currently in CD3 Supervisory districts 1, 3, and 4 to CD1.

In Rankin County move the following Precincts in currently CD3 to CD1:

South Brandon, Spring Hill, East Crossgate, Lakeland Drive, East Steen, Rankin, Antioch,

Brandon Central, Clary, East Cross Gate, Cross Roads, Lees Burg, and South Brandon.

In CD3 Madison County move supervisory districts 2 and 1, except precinct 111 to CD 1.

In CD3, move supervisory District 4 which is Lake Caroline precinct to CD2.

In CD2 move Claiborne and Jefferson Counties to CD3.

In CD4 in Jones County move Supervisor District 5 to CD3.

In CD4, in Forest County move the following 8 precincts to CD3: Dixie Pin, Ulfie Burley, North Height, Highland Park, Hattiesburg Central, Rowan, Super Center, and West Side.

JUDICIAL SYSTEM

THERE ARE NINETEEN (19) STATEWIDE JUDICIAL POSTS. MINORITIES MAKE-UP 45% OF THE POPULATION IN THESE DISTRICTS BUT ONLY 15% OF POSTS.

SOLUTION

APPEALS COURT IN THE 4TH DISTRICT

Move Jones County to fifth, and Claiborne and Jefferson Davis Counties to the fourth District.

Move Neshoba County to the Northern District and move Leflore County to the Central District.

CIRCUIT AND CHANCERY (Minorities East of HWY 55)

There are subdivided districts west of Highway 55, and we want them to also be created east of Hwy 55.

SOLUTION

Create subdistricts in Chancery Districts: 1,2,3,4,8,10,12,16,18,19,20 and 6.

Create subdistricts in Circuit Districts: 1,2,3,5,8,10,12,13,14,15,17,18,20.

Comments on Congressional Redistricting

By Rima Barber,

August 23, 2021

The major thing that must happen is to add population to the Second Congressional District. My recommendation would be to add portions of the City of Jackson and all of Adams County to the Second District. That would leave the Third District short of the required number. That could be made up by taking populations from the First and the Fourth Districts and moving them into the Third District.

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Thank you for having these nine public forums around the state, and being willing to listen to the concerns of Mississippians about redrawing voting district lines.

I also appreciate that the committee might be considering having some kind of public hearings, or at least some avenue for public feedback, before the redrawn state maps are voted on in the Legislature. That would make a big difference to all the communities of interest who are following this process.

I am sure you have started looking at the shifts in population around the state. Looking at the 82 counties in Mississippi, six counties -- Harrison, DeSoto, Rankin, Madison, Lamar and LaFayette -- grew by about 10% or more. The cities of Oxford, D'Iberville, and Flowood all had a 30 percent or more increase. Hinds County lost 17,545 people, but we are still the largest county at 227,742. Almost all the growth in DeSoto County (20,861) was in the Black population; almost all the growth in Madison County (7,000) was white. As was true around the country, the greatest population loss in Mississippi was mainly in rural areas.

Ten counties grew by 1.9% to 8%: Jackson, Forrest, George, Ittawamba, Stone, Oktibbeha, Hancock, Pontotoc and Union. All the rest either lost population, or gained or lost so little that it was basically a wash.

The new Census numbers also show that 70 Mississippi counties do not have enough people to comprise one Mississippi Senate seat's constituency, and 43 counties do not have enough people to meet the 24,273 threshold for a Mississippi House seat. So you will be combining counties to make new districts, but that could still mean that you can respect communities of interest, including Black communities, to make sure these communities have the opportunity to elect someone who can best represent them.

May I also note that DeSoto, Lee, Forrest, Lamar, Hancock, and Ittawamba Counties saw substantial increases in their Black population. The Census numbers show that, from 2010 to 2019, Mississippi gained nearly 20,000 Black residents, about 16,700 Hispanic residents and about 4,500 Asian residents.

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Because I live in Hinds County, I am interested in seeing at least 4 Mississippi senators elected who live in Hinds County, given the 227,742 people who live there; as well as 9 or 10 Mississippi House members who live in Hinds county and can well represent it.

Because I live in Jackson, and because it is Mississippi's Capital City, I would like to see 2 or 3 state Senators who actually live in Jackson representing Jackson, as well as 9 or 10 House Members who live in the Capital City. The City of Jackson needs more hard working and influential legislators to lobby effectively in our city's best interests. It's not clear to me how we can sell our state to new businesses, lobby for business expansion, and get bright young professionals and innovators to move to Mississippi – or to stay in Mississippi – if we continue to neglect our Capital City.

May I also ask that universities not be split in the redrawn districts. USM is definitely a community of interest but students there look to be randomly divided into two precincts, which discourages many from voting. Surely we want our young people to vote since that is part of what can invest them in Mississippi.

The latest census numbers also show that about 38% of Mississippi residents are Black, but only about 31% of Mississippi legislators are Black; 51% of Mississippians are women but only 16% of state legislators are women. We could do better than that.

May I also ask that stacking and packing and gerrymandering voting districts to make safe districts for any party be avoided. The classic safe district has a tendency to elect more extreme, fringe party members who too often go on to embarrass the state and not serve the best interests of all Mississippians.

Finally, I want to mention some of the issues that Mississippians support but that the state legislature has not yet addressed:
Better school funding and teacher salaries closer to the SE average, Medicaid expansion, an expansion of early voting especially in the midst of this on-going pandemic, closing the wage gap for Mississippi women, and helping more children attend quality day care with child care vouchers.

I realize that open and fair redistricting will not necessarily result in legislators who will address these issues, but it would be a start.

Again, may I thank you for holding this forum, and for continuing to work to be accountable to and best serve the people of Mississippi.